>>> cc:4

From: jsl
Date: 08 Nov 86 18:37:26 EST (Sat)
To: cisac@rockefeller.arpa
Subject: Reply to May, Bing & Steinbruner

(Lynn - do you know if May, Panofsky are on arpanet?)

I was grateful to see the 10/31 paper. Yes, CISAC doubtless can and therefore should play a useful role -- if for no more reason than it was asked. How fit into NAS formal procedures -- review, etc ??

What are the important questions?

IF we focus on arsenal exchange:

To a first approximation, as your paper stipulates, the SLBMs alone suffice for a survivable deterrent. It would be to our advantage if ALL the fixed-base ICBM's on both sides were dismantled, over a period of time if we could get the Russians to agree, in exchange for substantial reductions in our bomber force and part of our SSBNs as well. As they are surely reluctant about that, we should calculate just how far we ought to go, even with numerical imbalance?!, to provide incentives.

(Personally I am not sure just what we would lose by a unilateral build-down in that direction -- at the very least, we reduce attractive targets for them, targets which impose very large collateral damage. Are we just more intimidating in a crude, undifferentiated sense, just by maintaining a potential "first strike force", even lacking any sensible scenario for ever using it?)

But:

The catch concerns our uses of nuclear weapons, or responses to attacks, far short of arsenal exchange. Intuitively, proportionate build-downs would not alter the existing balance very much, an intellectual approach that evades having to face up to just what our limited war doctrine is! But I so much prefer calculated reductions (i.e. stressing invulnerable, crisis-stabilizing constructs, mostly saving the SLBMs disproportionately) that I wonder if we can evade that.

If you agree, we would have to go into much more tangled arguments than the strategic force exchange. Do we then put limited war doctrine on the agenda; if not to question it, at least to understand it well enough to factor it in our policy advice?

You mention briefly -- it needs some emphasis -- studying the sensitivity to cheating / imperfections in verification.

Also, how factor CM's (and small, mobile ICBMs) and their potential future development into the analysis?

Finally: your paper stresses the feasibility of sharp cuts. What are the advantages? Or is that a given after Reykjavik?